

added to the call block/permit and stored in the memory 19 or 30, and the string of numbers is compared to the first part of a telephone number of sender.

Furthermore, under the second embodiment 54 when a user enters an index number into the facsimile machine 10, the facsimile machine 10 may give the user the option to block all telephone calls/facsimile transmissions from the area code, or area/code exchange of the selected telephone number. The facsimile machine may also have this option when number are selected/identified in the first 52, third 57, fourth 70 and fifth 72 methods for adding numbers to a call block/call permit list.

When using the third embodiment 57 for adding numbers to the call block/permit list 50, the log 56 may have a bubble which can be filled out which provides an indication that the area code or area code and exchange of the selected number are to be added to the call block/call permit list. Of course, various other ways of adding telephone number fragments may also be utilized.

Having described the invention in detail and by reference to the preferred embodiments, it will be apparent that modifications and variations thereof are possible without departing from the scope of the invention.

What is claimed is:

1. A method for blocking unwanted facsimile transmissions comprising the steps of:

compiling at least one listing of telephone numbers or partial telephone numbers corresponding to authorized senders, or unauthorized senders, or both

5 authorized and unauthorized senders, wherein said compiling step includes at least one of the following steps:

1) manually entering a code corresponding to a telephone number or partial telephone number to be added to said listing; or

2) manually entering a telephone number or partial telephone

10 number to be added to said listing; or

3) optically scanning machine readable data corresponding to a telephone number or partial telephone number to be added to said listing; or

4) manually selecting a telephone number or partial telephone number, or information corresponding to a telephone number or partial telephone

15 number, displayed on a graphical display unit; or

5) sending an in-process signal while a facsimile machine is in the process of receiving or printing a facsimile transmission from a sender, wherein said in-process signal causes a telephone number or partial telephone number of said sender to be added to said listing;

20 receiving a signal indicative of a facsimile transmission from a potential transmitting sender;

determining whether said potential transmitting sender is an authorized sender or determining whether said potential transmitting sender is not an authorized sender by referring to said listing; and

25 if said transmitting sender is an unauthorized sender or is not an authorized sender, blocking, refusing or terminating the facsimile transmission.

2. The method of claim 1 wherein the method includes the step of causing said facsimile machine to print out a log of telephone numbers from which said facsimile transmission have been received, said log including information regarding when such facsimile transmissions were received.

3. The said method of claim 2 wherein said log includes a code corresponding to each printed telephone number which can be used in said first entering step.
4. The method of claim 2 wherein said log includes a plurality of markable portions, each markable portion corresponding to one of said printed telephone numbers, and wherein the method includes a user marking on selected ones of said markable portions to create said machine readable data.
5. The method of claim 4 wherein each markable portion is a closed shape.
6. The method of claim 1 wherein said facsimile machine includes said interactive graphical display unit, and wherein the method includes the step of displaying a log of telephone numbers from which facsimile transmission have been received and information regarding when such facsimile transmissions were received.
7. The method of claim 6 wherein said manually selecting step includes selecting a telephone number via said interactive graphical display unit.
8. The method of claim 7 wherein said manually selecting step includes confirming selection of a telephone number which is identified in said graphical display unit.
9. The method of claim 6 wherein said interactive graphical display unit is integrated into a housing of said facsimile machine.
10. The method of claim 6 wherein said interactive graphical display unit includes a touch pad configured to receive inputs from a user in response to manual pressure applied to said touch pad.

11. The method of claim 1 wherein said sending step includes a user pressing a button to send said in-process signal.

12. The method of claim 1 wherein the method further includes the step of, in response to said in-process signal, terminating the facsimile transmission from an undesired sender.

13. The method of claim 1 wherein the method further includes the step of, in response to said in-process signal, terminating the printing or receipt of a facsimile transmission that is being printed or received when said in-process signal is received.

14. The method of claim 1 wherein said blocking, refusing or terminating step includes connecting said facsimile machine to a telephone network and disconnecting said facsimile machine from said telephone network.

15. The method of claim 1 wherein said blocking, refusing or terminating step includes sending a disconnect signal that indicates that the telephone line to which said facsimile machine is coupled is disconnected.

16. The method of claim 1 wherein said blocking, refusing or terminating step includes failing to answer a telephone call from said proposed sender.

17. The method of claim 1 wherein said facsimile machine can be coupled to a computer to print documents in response to command and data signals from said computer, and wherein said facsimile machine can make copies of a scanned document.

18. The method of claim 1 wherein said at least one listing of telephone numbers or partial telephone numbers is compiled in a memory located in or part of a facsimile machine, and wherein said compiling, receiving and determining steps are carried out at or in said facsimile machine.

19. The method of claim 1 wherein said at least one listing of telephone numbers or partial telephone numbers is compiled in a memory located in or part of a computer to which a facsimile machine is operatively coupled, and wherein said receiving step is carried out at or in said facsimile machine.
20. The method of claim 1 wherein both of said manually entering steps and said optically scanning steps are carried out on said facsimile machine.
21. The method of claim 1 wherein said compiling step includes said first manually entering step, and does not include any of said second manually entering step, said optically scanning step, said manually selecting step, and said sending step.
22. The method of claim 1 wherein said compiling step includes said second manually entering step, and does not include any of said first manually entering step, said optically scanning step, said manually selecting step, and said sending step.
23. The method of claim 1 wherein said compiling step includes said optically scanning step, and does not include any of said first manually entering step, said second manually entering step, said manually selecting step, and said sending step.
24. The method of claim 1 wherein said compiling step includes said manually selecting step, and does not include any of said first manually entering step, said second manually entering step, said optically scanning step, and said sending step.
25. The method of claim 1 wherein said compiling step includes said sending step, and does not include any of said first manually entering step, said second manually entering step, said manually selecting step and said optically scanning step.
26. A method for blocking unwanted facsimile transmissions comprising the steps of:

compiling at least one listing of telephone numbers or partial telephone numbers corresponding to unauthorized senders, wherein said compiling step includes at

5 least one of the following steps:

1) manually entering a code corresponding to a telephone number or partial telephone number to be added to said listing; or

2) manually entering a telephone number or partial telephone number to be added to said listing; or

10 3) causing said facsimile machine to scan machine readable data corresponding to a telephone number or partial telephone number to be added to said listing; or

15 4) manually selecting a telephone number or partial telephone number, or information corresponding to a telephone number or partial telephone

number, displayed on a graphical display unit of said facsimile machine; or

15 5) sending a signal while said facsimile machine is in the process of receiving or printing a facsimile from an undesired sender, wherein said signal causes a telephone number or partial telephone number of said undesired sender to be added to said listing;

20 receiving a signal indicative of a facsimile transmission from a potential transmitting sender;

determining whether said potential transmitting sender is an unauthorized sender by referring to said listing; and

25 if said transmitting sender is an unauthorized sender blocking, refusing or terminating the facsimile transmission.

27. A method for compiling, in a memory of a facsimile machine, at least one listing of telephone numbers or partial telephone numbers corresponding to authorized senders, or unauthorized senders, or both authorized and unauthorized senders, wherein the method includes at least one of the following steps:

5 1) manually entering into said facsimile machine a code corresponding to a telephone number or partial telephone number to be added to said listing; or

2) manually entering into said facsimile machine a telephone number or partial telephone number to be added to said listing; or

10 3) causing said facsimile machine to scan machine readable data corresponding to a telephone number or partial telephone number to be added to said listing; or

4) manually selecting a telephone number or partial telephone number, or information corresponding to a telephone number or partial telephone

15 number, displayed on a graphical display unit of said facsimile machine; or

5) sending an in-process signal while said facsimile machine is in the process of receiving or printing a facsimile from a sender, wherein said in-process signal causes a telephone number or partial telephone number of said sender to be added to said listing.

28. A facsimile machine for blocking unwanted facsimile transmissions comprising:

receiving means for receiving a transmission from a potential transmitting sender;

memory means for storing at least one listing of telephone numbers or partial

5 telephone numbers corresponding to authorized senders, or unauthorized senders, or both authorized and unauthorized senders; and

a controller which can add telephone numbers or partial telephone numbers to said listing, wherein said telephone numbers or partial telephone numbers can be added by at least one of the following methods:

10 1) manually entering into said facsimile machine a code corresponding to a telephone number or partial telephone number to be added to said listing; or

2) manually entering into said facsimile machine a telephone number or partial telephone number to be added to said listing; or

15 3) causing said facsimile machine to scan machine readable data corresponding to a telephone number or partial telephone number to be added to said listing; or

4) manually selecting a telephone number or partial telephone number, or information corresponding to a telephone number or partial telephone number, displayed on a graphical display unit of said facsimile machine; or

20 5) sending an in-process signal while said facsimile machine is in the process of receiving or printing a facsimile from a sender, wherein said in-process signal causes a telephone number or partial telephone number of said sender to be added to said listing;

25 wherein said controller is configured to determine whether said potential transmitting sender is an authorized sender or whether said potential transmitting sender is not an authorized sender by referring to said listing, and wherein said controller is configured such that if said transmitting sender is an unauthorized sender or is not an authorized sender, said controller blocks, refuses or terminates the facsimile transmission.

29. The facsimile machine of claim 28 further including incoming facsimile processing means for converting facsimile transmissions into print data, outgoing facsimile processing means for converting data into facsimile transmissions, and print means for printing received facsimile transmissions.

30. A method for selectively blocking facsimile transmissions comprising the steps of:

receiving a proposed facsimile transmission from a sending device coupled to a telephone line;

5 determining, or attempting to determine, a telephone number of said telephone line; and

if said telephone number of said telephone line cannot be determined, blocking, refusing or terminating the proposed facsimile transmission.

31. The method of claim 30 wherein said receiving, determining and blocking steps are carried out in or by a facsimile machine.

32. The method of claim 31 wherein said blocking, refusing or terminating step includes connecting said facsimile machine to a telephone network and disconnecting said facsimile machine from said telephone network.

33. The method of claim 31 wherein said blocking, refusing or terminating step includes sending a disconnect signal that indicates that a telephone line to which said facsimile machine is coupled is disconnected.

34. The method of claim 30 wherein said blocking, refusing or terminating step includes failing to answer a telephone call from said sending device.

35. The method of claim 30 wherein said determining step includes reviewing a header of said proposed facsimile transmission.

36. The method of claim 30 wherein said determining step includes reviewing information regarding said telephone line, wherein said information is provided by a telephone company.

37. A facsimile machine for selectively blocking facsimile transmissions comprising:

receiving means for receiving a proposed facsimile transmission from a sending device coupled to a telephone line; and

5 a controller for determining, or attempting to determine, a telephone number of said telephone line and for, if said telephone number of said telephone line cannot be determined, blocking, refusing or terminating the facsimile transmission.

38. The facsimile machine of claim 37 wherein further including incoming facsimile processing means for converting facsimile transmissions into print data, outgoing facsimile processing means for converting data into facsimile transmissions, and print means for printing received facsimile transmissions.

39. A method for blocking unwanted facsimile transmissions comprising the steps of:

compiling at least one listing of partial telephone numbers;

receiving a signal indicative of a facsimile transmission from a potential transmitting sender;

determining whether said potential transmitting sender is an authorized sender or determining whether said potential transmitting sender is not an authorized sender by referring to said listing; and

if said potential transmitting sender is an unauthorized sender or is not an authorized sender, blocking, refusing or terminating the facsimile transmission.

40. The method of claim 39 wherein each of said partial telephone numbers includes a string of numbers, and wherein said determining step includes determining whether said string of numbers is present in a telephone number of said potential transmitting sender.

41. The method of claim 40 wherein said string of numbers is compared to the first part of said telephone number of said potential transmitting sender.

42. The method of claim 41 wherein said first part includes an area code or an area code and exchange.

43. The method of claim 39 wherein each partial telephone number includes a string of numbers and a string of wild card characters.